A Study on the Cloud Picture Test by Children

A STUDY ON THE CLOUD PICTURE TEST BY CHILDREN

by

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1. Purpose of the Research

The cloud picture test has its beginning in the three cloud pictures which K.Struve devised in 1932 with a view to making up for shortcomings in the Rorschach test. In 1937 W.Stern adopted it by way of a new method of inquiry into imagination, propagating at the same time the value it carries for a method of personality diagnosis.

I have been using the cloud picture test likewise as one of methods of personality diagnosis, and discovered that, with more ambiguous stimuli than those of the Rorschach test, the cloud oicture test presents significant differences in the individual perception of the stimuli, which led me to adopt the stimuli as a means of exploration of personality structure, instead of using them for clinical diagnosis. To begin with, I conducted a series of preliminary experiments upon a group of small children, in order to ascertain whether these types of responses observed in the data previously collected on grown-up subjects should present any change with the growth of the child, and how if they should. The following is a report of the results of the said experiments.

2. Experiment

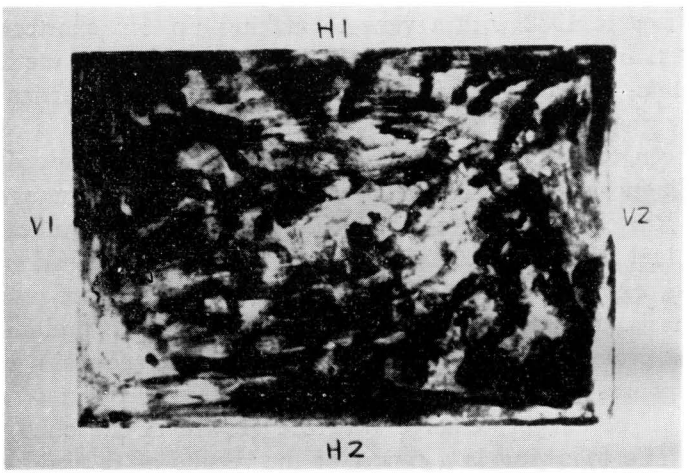
The three cloud pictures of K. Struve were used as stimuli. The subjects were boys (Kindergarten pupils) from 5 years and 10 months to 6 years and 5 months, who all showed the intelligence figure of more than 100 in the I. Q. I interviewed them individually, sitting face to face at a table in a quiet room. The interview was operated with the picture cards in the order of Card I (with the most distinct shades and forms), Card II (which ranks between Card I and Card II in its clearness) and Card III (the vaguest). The operation consists of three parts.

1) After the instructions are given, the experimenter asks the subject, "You see many things in this picture, What are the things you see?" When the subject has given his response to the picture from one angle, the card is turned so that he sees it from another angle, until he has responded from all the four angles of the rectangular picture, his responses being recorded at once in the fullest detail. Meanwhile, the time required for his first response is measured and the location of the thing he sees in the picture should be ascertained. If the subject's response should be very weak, the experimenter may give some encouragement, careful not to influence the response in any way at all.

2) The next part is the drawing task. The subject is given a piece of paper the same in size as the test card, and asked to draw an outline of the thing he sees in the picture exactly as he sees it. Again this is done from the four angles.

3) Then the third part is the test of suggestibility. The experimenter, by way of instructions, asks, "You should see a dog in this picture. Where do you see it?" As objects for suggestions, dogs and cats may be used for asymmetrical familiar objects, butterflies and bats for symmetrical familiar objects, houses and desks for angular familiar objects. The subject is allowed to look at the picture from whichever angle he likes. The time required for accepting or rejecting the

Card I



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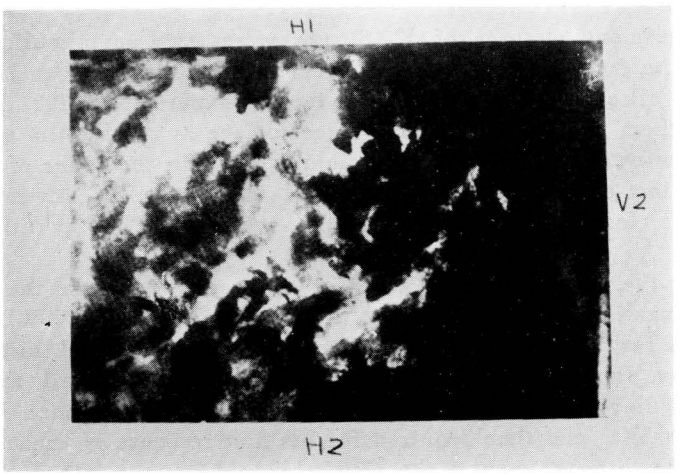

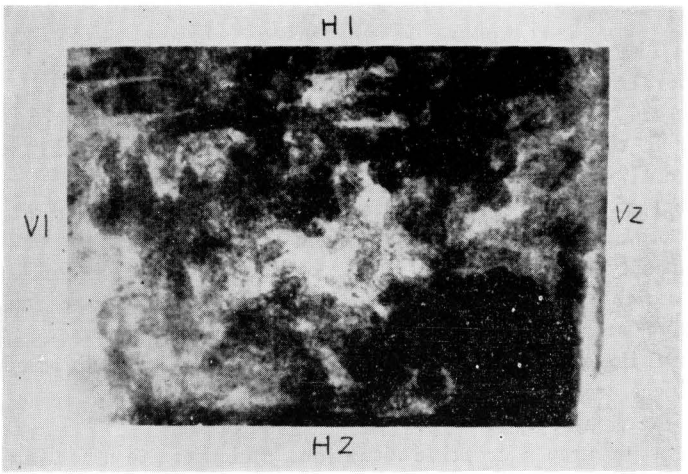

Card III

Fig. 1. The Could Pictures of K. Struve

suggestion is measured. These three operations are conducted for each of the three cards. However, the subject being a small boy, it takes about an hour for each card, so that it would be advisable not to take the whole cards at a time. I did it at a few-day's interval between each card.

3. Integration of the data

The data thus obtained were arranged according to the analysis form of Table 1. The items in the form are modifications of what W. Stern employed,

Table. 1. Analysis Sheet

1. Reaction time
2. Number of responses
3. Content of response and the ma
4. Response pattern
   (1) Enumerative type
   (2) Explanative type
   (3) Intuitive type
   (4) Creative-irregular type
   (5) Creative-regular type
5. Drawing pattern
   (1) Form-binding
   (2) Reality-binding
   (3) Persistence-flexibility
6. Suggestibility
   (1) Number of accepting the suggestions
   (2) Time required for accepting or rejecting the suggestion

and there were other suggestions taken from the researches by K. Struve and W. Jacobson. I have not space enough here to explain the items at length. Therefore I shall confine myself to a brief definition of the response pattern, which is the fourth item, and the drawing pattern, which is the fifth item in the fouth item, and the drawing pattern, which is the fifth item in the analysis

form.

The response pattern may be classified into 5 types.

1) Enumerative type

This type may be defined as observed when the subject simply points out the things he sees in the picture, without establishing any relationship between them.

2) Explanative type

The subject of this type imagines one thing in an abstracted way, and gives logical explanation to its relation with other things.

3) Intuitive type

A whole series of things come to the subject intuitively and realistically.

4) Creative-irregular type

With loose imagination, unrealistic relationship is established among the things the subject sees in the picture

5) Creative-regular type

The subject pictures a creative situation, and there is a feeling of reality in that creativeness. His perception and imagination develop in their close relationship.

The drawing pattern may be considered from three aspects.

1) Form-binding

The idea of form-binding, invented by W. Jacobson, implies the degree to which the subject's outline is regulated by the objective form of the picture. Jacobson concludes that the degree thus detected is in close co-relationship with the personality type of E. Kretschmer.

2) Reality-binding.

This idea is based on the degree to which the subject's outline is freed from the picture of the card, with a suggestion of reality.

3) Persistence-Flexibility

Persistence-flexibility may be observed when the subject sees an object in the picture consistently as one and the same object regardless of the angles from which he sees it, or when he recognizes different objects with the different angles.

4. Discussion of the Results of the Experiment

It is not possible here to report the results of analysis for each of the 18 cases. Therefore, the discussion here is : first, the general characteristic of the child's responses, and secondly, a comment on fairly typical responses selected from the whole responses.

A comparison of the characteristic responses of grown-ups observed in the past data and also those of my own, which I previously obtained from a few experiments, with those of children will point to the following conclusion.

1) One notices a few cases of what are called whole responses, in which the subject expresses an intuitive impression of the whole stimuli in a single word. The stimuli in question, unlike those of the Rorschach test, do not register in grown-ups the so-called whole response in the Rorschach test. For example, some of the responses are: "Dabbing of paints," "Fish bowel," or "Steam." In other words, in the case of a grown-up, the impression of the

whole stimuli is expressed with its component parts integrated into a single impression. The past researches by the Rorschach test also indicate that a gradual decrease of the W% starts at the age of 3 or 4 when the outer world is not yet clearly separated from the self, and lasts until the time of emergence in the lower grades of elementary school of the ability to recognize definite objects.

2) The content of the children's responses, as compared with those of grown-ups, has a characteristic feature that there is little of "humanness" in it. Things that appear in the content are mostly inanimate objects, things of nature and animals.

3) The response pattern is all enumerative, and only a few subjects showed the intuitive response pattern. There was no intuitive response in the strict sense of the term, not to speak of the creative pattern observed in grown-ups.

4) As to the drawing pattern a stronger tendency toward freedom from the stimuli was observed. The form-binding was not very conspicuous. Also the children's responses indicated difficulties they felt in rediscovery and recall, and the shifting of location was more frequent.

5) The children showed more suggestibility than grown-ups, but it was of several types.

Now, these are the general response characteristics observed in my data. But it seems to me that a report on individual characteristics is more valuable than a generalization such as attempted above.

Hence the following several types are found out from various individual responses.

1) The first group consists of subjects whose responses are rich in content and show a high degree of suggesibility. The high frequency of response implies a strong faculty of imagination. The response pattern, which is normally enumerative with a child, has a touch of creativeness in it. The drawing pattern shows

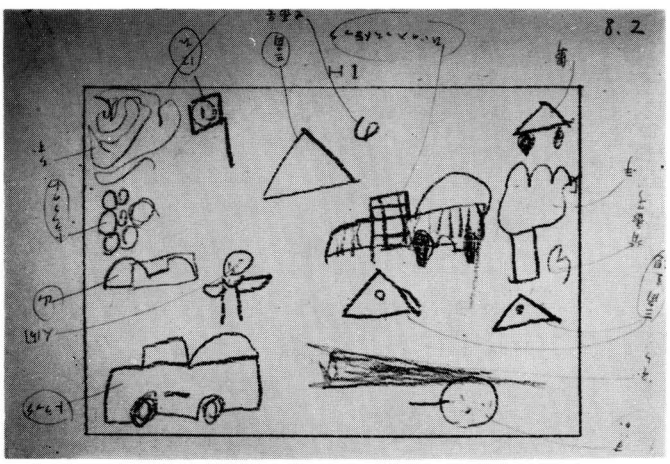

Fig. 2.

little indication of form-binding, and one observes there free perception not regulated by the stimuli; it is hard to detect any similarity between the outline and the original picture. Also more things are discovered in the picture than before in the act of recollection, and the shifting of location frequently happens. Suggestions are often accepted and the time required for acceptance is short illustrates this type (Fig.2).

Fig. 3.

2) The second group is characterized by a rather intuitive response pattern and a low degree of form-binding. The stimuli are received in an intuitive, impressionistic and egocentric manner. The frequency of response is not very high. The drawing pattern shows complete freedom from the stimuli. Suggestions are not readily accepted; the subject has a tendency to reject anything he does not recognize with his own eyes (Fig.3).

3) The characteristics of the third group are poor imagination, the enumerative response pattern, and a high degree of form-binding. In the drawing task the subject looks at the stimuli over again, and faithfully copies the grey and the dark parts. The form of the outline, therefore, is strongly bound

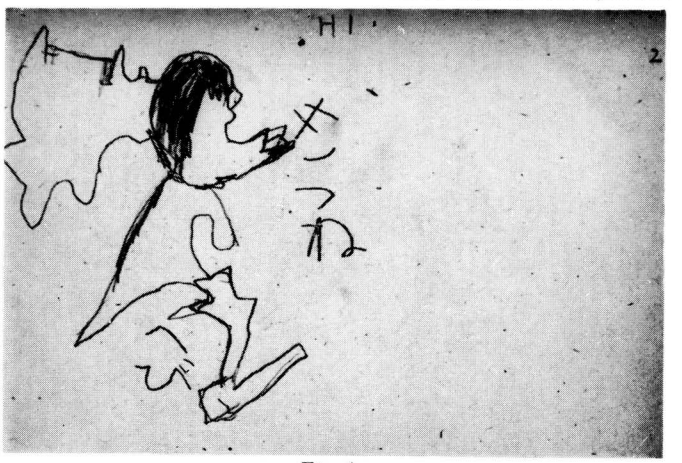

Fig. 4.

by the stimuli and yet appears quite unrealistic. The subject betrays lack of flexibility to imagine a number of things from a certain area of the stimuli. Thus few suggestions are accepted, and if accepted, only a partial recognition is made in the picture. Fig.4 illustrates this type.

That is all that could be said as a summary of my research. This test through the subject's perception of cloud pictures, which involves the operations of drawing task and a test of suggestibility, unlike the Rorschach test, may prove rather troublesome and therefore may not well be applied to clinical practices. But if one probes into the dynamic relationship that exists among the results of these three operations, one will realize that it is all the more significant method. The foregoing grouping into various types was really carried out with that intention. The data collected and reported here are not very many, and the types observed there are by no means definitive. Much remains to be clarified by further research. The child's response pattern, on which this report will throw some light, should be clarified more precisely and conclusively through a collection of additional data on each stage of the child's growth.

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